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the Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

9 February 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Andrew W. Marshall
Director, Net Assessment
Office of the Secretary of Defense

SUBJECT: Strategic Balance Appraisal

1. You may have already seen our appraisal of the strategic balance over the next ten years. In case you have not, I am enclosing a copy of the abbreviated version. The full NIE will be published before too long.

2. While I hesitate to call this a net assessment -- because of emotions involved -- it certainly has some of that flavor. It very deliberately avoids any utilization of US force tactics such as specific targeting plans. It is not intended to be a portrayal of the results of an actual strategic war. I do believe it is a good characterization of the relative and absolute capabilities of the two strategic forces.

25X1 3. [] has been through this. I would really enjoy sitting down with the two of you at your convenience to discuss the methodology; whether this kind of a portrayal is perhaps as useful a comparison as we can give to high-level decision-makers or whether a full-scale war game should be played in an attempt to forecast an actual result of a strategic war; how, within the Executive Branch, assessments that do go into specific tactical applications of US forces should be performed; and whether in the next few months we can devise a technique for comparing conventional forces in Europe that could result in as succinct a comparison as I believe this strategic one is.



STANSFIELD TURNER

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Attachment

cc: Secretary Brown
[] (w/o att)

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